(c) Special Cells have been created in Delhi and Mumbai to dispose of the pending cases under FERA before the deadline. 31.5.2002 provided under FEMA.

(d) As these cases are under investigation, the amount involved in contravention can bot be quantified at this stage.

Zone-wise deails of pending cases of FERA violation as on 31.10.2001

Name of the Zone	
Ahmedabad	151
Bangalore	531
Kolkata	191
Chennai	412
Delhi	622
Jalandhar	243
Mumbai	229
Total	2379
RBI cases*	21626

*These cases have been transferred recntly by RBI for investigation for suspected FERA violation.

Extravagance at the Level of Ministers

†1547. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to completely stop the extravagant expenditures at the level of Ministers alongwith retrenchment of Central Government employees to implement the economic reforms; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor and what is the rationale for retrenchment of employees only?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHEPATIL): (a) and (b) Downsizing the Government workforce and observing economy in non-plan expenditure is a continuous process and instructions in this regard are issued from time to time. The Prime Minister has also in his letter dated 23.9.2000 addressed to all the Ministers emphasized the need for practising austerity in their official lives and for adhering

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

to the existing instructions on entitlements in use of staff cars, official hospitality, entitlement of the scale of personal staff, foreign travel, telephones etc.

Excise duty from tyres and tubes

1548. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether excise duty from tyres and tubes is one of the significant sources of revenue for the exchequer;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government lost Rs. 2160 crores due to excise duty on tyres and tubes during 1997—2000;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps are being taken to raise the collection of revenue on this account?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of answer to (b) above.

Tax Collection

1549. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:

SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the direct and indirect tax collections have taken a dip even after massive restructuring were carried out in these services to give officials better career prospects; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN):

(a) and (b) Sir, direct and indirect tax collections during the first six months of the current financial year has provisionally amounted to Rs. 77422 crores, as